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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this essay is to explore the relationship between the home life and child rearing techniques of Chinese families in Taiwan, and the academic readiness and achievement of the children of these families. Research reveals that Taiwanese children, both individually and in a group, are among the highest achievers in all international comparisons of educational attainment. A number of studies suggest that the child rearing milieu in modern Taiwan provides a natural experiment that may suggest alternatives to the Western model of child rearing. Family life was the central institution in traditional China; it continues to play a major role in the life of modern Taiwanese and interacts directly with the educational processes of the island society. In modern Taiwan, as in traditional dynastic China, the family's reason for being is the children. A Chinese father and mother have no greater pleasure than to see their son or daughter succeed in school and be admitted to a good university and career. These notions are placed in historical, social, cultural, and comparative contexts in the present work. The discussion provides a synthesis of findings from the scientific literature, surveys, field-based observations, and personal experiences. Approximately 70 references are cited. (RH)

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CHILDREN OF CHINA:

AN HISTORICAL INQUIRY INTO THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CHINESE FAMILY LIFE AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

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FOREWORD

I have been asked by Professor Douglas Smith to write a brief foreword to his most recent study, titled "Children of China." In this research project, which was funded by the Pacific Cultural Foundation of Taipei, Professor Smith has investigated the relationship that exists between Chinese family life in contemporary Taiwan and childhood academic readiness and achievement. Dr. Smith's underlying thesis is that, by studying a foreign society, it is possible to gain insights into American family life, education, and child-rearing practices and how they may be improved.

It is a pleasure for me to recommend this short work, which I believe will help the reader understand more about how a society like Taiwan, which differs dramatically from American society, is attempting to bring about the greatest opportunities for its young people through the educational process.

Bruce C. Flack
Professor of History
Former Vice President of Academic
Affairs, Glenville State College
Coordinator, West Virginia
Educational Satellite Network

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Many individuals and organizations helped make the following pages possible. Without guidance and assistance from colleagues and friends and financial support from institutions and foundations, scholarly inquiries of this type are quite impossible.

I will use the remaining space to thank some of those who took time to help with this field-based research and writing project. Others who helped are omitted by accident or oversight.

The Pacific Cultural Foundation of Taipei, Taiwan, has been both generous and gracious to me over the past twelve years. Under the innovative leadership of Dr. Jeanne Tchong Koei Li, who was president from 1976 to 1986, and under the continued distinguished leadership of the current president, Mr. Yu-sheng Chang, I have been able to visit, lecture in, and do field research in Taiwan. I wish to acknowledge and thank the leadership of PCF and also the thoughtful professional staff. Particularly, I wish to recognize Miss Cathy Wang, Section

Chief for China Studies, for her help in logistical and advisement matters. Miss Wang and the others at PCF made my visits to Formosa academically rewarding, restorative, and fun.

To the professors and students at Tunghai University and National Chung-Hsing University, I express my gratitude for assisting me in better understanding children of China, Chinese family life, and the strength of Chinese civilization. My recent two years in Asia were made memorable and happy because of my Chinese colleagues and students.

Upon my return to America after a two year sabbatical, I was graciously welcomed back to West Virginia University and encouraged to continue my research and writing. Mr. Arthur L. Morris and Dr. William Vehse of WVU, and Dr. Edsel Gainer, who retired from WVU in 1987, all contributed to the environment that allowed me to pursue my scholarly activities in conjunction with my administrative duties. I thank these three men for their efforts in my behalf. West Virginia University has always been supportive of academic and teaching opportunities that have been afforded me.

I wish to acknowledge Mrs. Pat Burkette for carefully reading and typing my manuscript; Mrs. Jewel L. Vaughan for applying her jeweler's eye to this work (as well as my other four books); Dr. Bruce Flack for

his suggestions and comments and, most particularly, Mrs. Grace Henderson who, as in the past, made this effort possible. Mrs. Henderson's contributions cannot be minimized, for without her devotion to our Graduate Center and her care in all duties she performs this manuscript would still be a vision.

Mistakes in fact and/or interpretation are mine; any successes that this work achieves are shared with the persons and organizations mentioned above.

Douglas C. Smith
Winter, 1989
Shepherdstown, WV

INTRODUCTION

By building house on a sound foundation the world is made secure.

-Confucius

This essay on Chinese family life and academic achievement is meant to read straight forwardly, almost as if it were a journalistic account. It attempts to give the reader, in the most general way, an account of child-rearing practices and family life of the Chinese in Taiwan with a de-emphasis on elaboration and complications. Upon reading this essay, it should be possible to have a general view of both the childhood experience in modern Taiwan and the unique and enduring Chinese family configuration. How these interact directly and indirectly with academic readiness and achievement are the vehicle and thesis of this essay.

The worlds of family life and education exist as ubiquitously as does the search for the meaning of existence. The actualities of what we or any other nation have so far done for our schools and children are miniscule compared to the potentialities. The constructive and disruptive power of humankind creates reverence and fear of the future. Those who dare to suggest that one society can and must learn from another - even at the expense of the loss of national pride and face - must assume responsibility for this vision of internationalism and interdependence.

Yet only by realizing that the planet earth is now a single community can we anticipate avoiding a return to barbarism.

CHILDREN OF CHINA: AN INQUIRY INTO THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CHINESE FAMILY LIFE AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN MODERN TAIWAN

Douglas C. Smith

Professor, West Virginia University

ORIENTATIONS

Many arguments can be promulgated for studying the childhood experience in different cultures. For only through such studies can we better understand the successes and failures of how we in Western society are anticipating the future of our civilization. Cross-cultural studies introduce concepts and approaches developed in many different contexts. Concepts and methods for understanding human behavior are attuned to the culture from which they arise (Azuma, 1986). The study of the childhood experience of Chinese children in Taiwan has attracted my interest for a variety of reasons.

Douglas C. Smith, a frequent visitor to the Orient, is Center Coordinator and Public Service Professor for the West Virginia University Graduate Center. Smith holds six earned university degrees including the Ph.D. in history (1975). He completed his post-doctoral study in education at Columbia University. Dr. Smith has written five books on comparative education and numerous articles on history, political science, and the Orient. Professor Smith, 45, spends his declining years in the Shenandoah Valley, where he makes his home; on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, where he recreates; and in Taiwan, where he retains a residence.

One is that research done by a variety of distinguished scholars has shown that the Taiwanese children, individually or as a group, are among the highest achievers in all international comparisons of educational attainment (Stevenson, 1986). Also, a number of studies suggest that the Chinese child-rearing milieu, as found in modern Taiwan,* provides a natural experiment that may suggest alternatives to the Western model of child-rearing practices. It is difficult to be fair to a culture when making generalizations. Taiwan consists of a variety of different ethnological groups, with different linguistic backgrounds, social standing, religions, and, most importantly, occupations. Yet, I believe that a greater degree of homogeneity exists in Taiwan in the area of behavior towards children and in the area of child rearing than in any other Asian culture, with the possible exception of Japan.

Family life and educational vividity are interwoven into the fabric of Chinese history. Though these two characteristics that have dominated Chinese culture for thousands of years are not unique to

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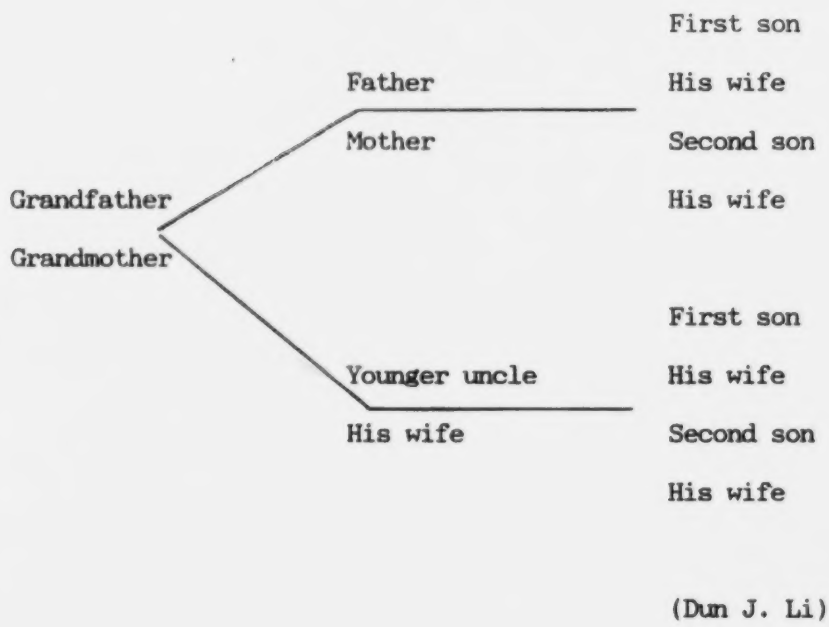
*The terms Taiwan, Formosa, the island province, island China, and the Republic of China are used interchangeably in this work.

Sinica, they have individually and co-supportively played a larger part in that region's protracted civilization than that of any other nation (Smith, 1984).

Family life is the central institution for all that happened in traditional China; it continues to play a major role in the life of modern Taiwan's people and interacts directly with the educative processes of the island society. Though the traditional extended family in which many generations would live in the same home or compound has disappeared from most of the Taiwan landscape, the concept and the influence of "family" remains a dominant factor in social and economic vitality. Nucleus family models - where a husband, wife, and children (average three in Taiwan) live in the one domicile - are now very common. Only on the larger farms in the beautiful countryside of Taiwan can one find grandparents, parents, uncles and aunts, children and their spouses, and grandchildren living in the same large U-shaped, single-level home. Urbanization and industrialization have led to two dynamic qualities that have slowly eroded the extended family - fewer children generally are born to urban families and industrialization has tended to give younger persons greater economic independence and, as a consequence, less eagerness to remain under the watchful eye of their parents or grandparents. Traditionally, the senior male of a family, if his health allowed, would rule the household till his death. He

would be followed by de facto rule of his wife; real power would, however, go to the next oldest male, usually the first son. Children, because of economic dependence, the honor of the family name, and the Confucian ideal of reverence to one's elders and of one's ancestors (filial piety), would remain part of the surname structure and take their place in the elaborate schemata that characterized the Chinese family constellation. The chart below is a generalization of the family structure of traditional China and rural life in Taiwan:



(Dun J. Li)

In recent years, micro-analytical sociological studies of the Chinese family have focused on the various esoteric relations usually

found in the Taiwan countryside. Generalizations are seldom made, and the research done is normally so stylistically convoluted and steeped in sociological jargon as to make the end product of limited academic value. Yet, from these recent pedantic works on Chinese family life, most of which were written in the 1960's, 1970's and 1980's, one can draw some broad conclusions that give meaning to the nature of the modern Chinese family in Taiwan and its influence on childhood and education (Smith, 1981).

Structural relationships and authority are the recurring themes in the Chinese nucleus and extended or "grand" family. Yet these are only a microcosm for a more broadly based set of interpersonal interactions and constellations. Traditional China held that the father-son dominant-subservient relation was of paramount importance but also four cardinal relationships among men must exist: the emperor and his subjects, husband and wife, older and younger siblings, and friend and friend. Sub-relationships that the Confucian ethic emphasized were older and younger, teacher and pupil, gentry and peasant, and educated and illiterate. Unlike the European and Japanese models in which the king or emperor was absolute and thought to rule by heavenly decree for life, the Chinese always held a more utilitarian and democratic vision of their king. This quote written by the eminent Professor James Legge, known best for his translations of the Analects, perhaps illustrates the relative position of the king and his subjects.

Extrapolation would suggest that the philosophy expressed here was pervasive in most Chinese relationships, save the sacrosanct one between father and son.

> The emperor has been uniformly regarded as the son of God by adoption only, and liable to be displaced from that position as a punishment for the offence of misrule . . . If the ruler failed in his duties, the obligation of the people was at an end, and his divine right disappeared simultaneously. Of this we have an example in a portion of the Canon to be examined by-and-by. Under the year 558 B.C. we find the following narrative. One of the feudal princes asked an official, saying, "Have not the people of the Wei State done very wrong in expelling their ruler?" "Perhaps the ruler himself," was the reply, "may have done very wrong. . ." If the life of the people is impoverished, and if the spirits are deprived of their sacrifices, of what use is the ruler, and what can the people do but get rid of him?" (Russell, 1922.)

There were many advantages to the extended traditional Chinese family. Perhaps the one of most impact was that it created in all members a sense of belonging to a permanent reference group with whom they had common goals and aspirations. This psychological dimension has been lost to many of the peoples of China now that single nucleus family life is becoming more the norm. Advantages for education were also pronounced; to enable a bright young man the time and leisure to

study for the national examinations that were required for entry into the upper levels of power, a financial support system had to be developed and maintained. The traditional Chinese family, with resources spanning two or three generations and monies centralized in the hands of the senior man or woman, could select the child with greatest potential in academics and, by pooling the family's fortune, ensure him the opportunity to become part of the intelligentsia.

Weaknesses in the traditional family also existed. If a father was unkind, this could not be held in check. The wife was often treated scrofulously by the mother- and grandmother-in-law, and young couples had little or no opportunity to choose the life-style they wanted. It might be mentioned that until recently marriages were arranged by the families involved, and the two prized commodities sought by in-laws were a family's high economic status and its educational level (Rawski).

In modern Taiwan, as was the case in traditional dynastic China, the family's reason for being is in the children. Boys have always been more sought than daughters, though today this is less the case. The logic behind this was essentially economic - a son would carry on the family name, inherit the household, and, more importantly, assure a life of comfort for his parents in their old age. Girls seldom had these prerogatives.

Yet, all children were and are loved. No statistical information exists, but history suggests that the children of China have always held a much more important place in the family configuration than in the world's other highly sophisticated societies. Even today as I walk the streets of Taipei, Kaohsiung, Singapore, Canton, Hong Kong, and the other Chinese cities of Taiwan, I sense, on observing parent-child interaction, a closeness and love that families in the West often do not experience. Seldom is discipline necessary in the Chinese household; the parents seem able to set role models for their children at a very young age, and the youngsters respond in a most positive and pleasing manner. The Chinese children in Taiwan do not fear their parents; they do revere and respect them greatly and try to please them, particularly in their academic achievements as well as in music, dance, and sports. A Chinese father and mother have no greater pleasure in life than to see their son or daughter succeed in school and be admitted to a good university and career. One might speculate that a child will often subconsciously act out his parents' expectations and values. The children of China exemplify this phenomenon.

CHILDREN OF CHINA: AN INQUIRY

The purpose of this short essay is to explore the relationship between Chinese home life, child rearing techniques as found in Chinese families in Taiwan, and academic readiness and achievement. It is my view that by studying the life-style of a culture, a nation, or a civilization, particularly the way that a family interacts with its young, we can better understand other dimensions of the society under study. What I am suggesting is that family life, particularly child-rearing techniques, may be seen as a metaphor for the society in which they are being practiced. Families that are structured, lack flexibility, and are authoritarian in nature may suggest that the society, or the nation, also has as its essence these characteristics. Families that are lazy, without direction, lacking future-orientedness, and living for instant pleasure and gratification may tell us that the society in which these families are found also has this same myriad of qualities. A family that does not revere its older members and haphazardly cares for its children may tell us that the society in which this family is found also is uncaring about the elderly and unconcerned about the behavior of the children. A society therefore can be seen mirrored in family configurations, in interaction between children and adults, and in the quality of life the older generation is willing to extend to the young. As was suggested, family life can be seen as a metaphor, as an indicator of the vividity of a civilization.

Indifference, anti-intellectualism, rigid and authoritarian parenting techniques, poor use of time and resources, all of these, if found to be endemic in a civilization's families, suggest that the civilization is not vital and that it is declining. The distinguished historian Arnold Toynbee has suggested that challenges, future-orientedness, and a willingness to forego gratification are all related directly to a civilization's greatness. If families do not emphasize and respect their past heritage and show its relationship to the future, perhaps it is true that the nation in which the family is located has lost its idealism and moved into the area of those societies that are plagued with predestinationalism and fatalism.

During my years of visiting Asia, and more specifically the period of time in which I lived as a permanent resident in Taiwan, I became what social scientists might call a "participant-observer." This term can be defined to mean an individual who is entitled to participate in most of the activities of a society in which he is visiting or in which he lives and yet, because he still retains a certain degree of alien status, is unable to involve himself fully in every aspect of that society. This individual, if he is from academic life and if his reason for visiting a society is scholarship or teaching, normally becomes an observer of that society. I believe it is true to suggest that most of the indigenous citizenry of any nation are so involved in living their lives on a day-to-day basis that they frequently fail to

be cognizant of the activities, the changes, and the problems that surround them. However, if he takes the time to notice, a participant-observer visiting a far nation is acutely aware of the strengths and weaknesses of that society. From 1986 to 1988, I interacted daily, if not hourly, with the Chinese population in Taiwan. I had the good fortune to live with Chinese families and to observe the interaction between parent and child. The Chinese community in which I lived was filled with mothers and new children, and I was a frequent guest at their homes.

A major limitation of this study must be addressed at this point. While I was in the Orient as a visiting senior professor and a Fellow of the Pacific Cultural Foundation, most of the people with whom I interacted were associated with academic life or government. These people were generally well-educated, many of them having earned an advanced degree in the United States, Germany, France, England, or Japan. They were fluent in English, and they represented the academic and intellectually elite of the society. Because these individuals were the people with whom I dealt daily, a dilemma existed in my efforts in research. My conclusions about the Chinese family, its strengths and weaknesses, techniques for raising children, discipline, and parental and grandparent relationships with the young are based essentially on research done with this group of people with whom I associated. One could suggest that Chinese families living in great

poverty in rural areas or in the mountains of Taiwan, as well as Chinese families eking out a life in the slums of the large cities of Taiwan, are not represented fairly. Undoubtedly, the techniques of child-rearing differ, based on occupation, income level, education, family size, ancestry, and even political orientation. Therefore, it is necessary to indicate that the generalizations in this brief essay are essentially representative of the "middle-class value group" in Chinese society as found in contemporary Taiwan. This group makes up about 80 percent of the population. Only occasionally will I discuss literature that does reflect the attitudes of parenting in the lower socio-economic classes.

It also should be noted that the research done represents primarily the Chinese family in Taiwan; however, these generalizations are valid for Chinese families of the same social and economic class throughout all of Southeast Asia. My travels to Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Hong Kong, and mainland China suggest to me that the Chinese family in all of these places remains essentially the same. Incidentally, many of the generalizations presented here are also applicable to middle-class Japanese family life. (I spent the summer of 1987 in Japan as a visiting scholar and field-based researcher).

From 1895 until the end of World War II, Taiwan was an overseas colony of Japan. A majority of the people living in Taiwan are of Taiwanese ancestry; as a consequence, they were exposed through their grandparents or their parents to the Japanese value system and way of life. Even those mainlanders who chose to leave China during 1945-1950 to seek refuge in Taiwan have been influenced by the Taiwanese customs. One could suggest that Taiwan is an amalgamation! It is certainly a Chinese society; yet, unlike most Chinese societies, it was redefined dramatically by the 50-year Japanese occupation, with resulting changes in the political, school, and value systems. Taiwan also has been influenced more than other Eastern societies (with the possible exception of Hong Kong and Singapore) by Western values, influence, and technologies. In recent years, the United States has played a significant role in Taiwan's economic development through commercial, banking, and business interaction.

Taiwan is an island located approximately 250 miles off the coast of mainland China. It can be found opposite Fukien Province and is separated from the Asian mainland by the Straits of Formosa. The total population of Taiwan today is approximately 20 million. Some 17 million of these people can be identified as Taiwanese. Approximately 2,700,000 may be considered as mainlanders who chose to move to Taiwan after 1945. The remainder of the indigenous population is made up of aborigines (or "mountain people," as they prefer to be called) who live

in the beautiful hilly regions of northern, eastern, and southern Taiwan, and on the islands off the southeast coast of Taiwan, particularly Orchid and Green Islands. I was fortunate to visit with most of the seven tribes of the aborigines and to observe how they dealt with their children. Time does not permit a discussion of family life in aborigine society. A forthcoming article will address the childhood experience as found on Orchid Island (Lan Yu) with the Yami peoples. (I lived with this tribe in June of 1987 for the purpose of researching their education system.)

In recent years, a great deal of interest has been directed to academic achievement of Asian young people, particularly in Japan and Taiwan. The reason for this outpouring of research that can be found in mass-consumption magazines, as well as academic journals, is that Asian youngsters, by all valid and measurable examination systems, are out-achieving the children of the United States at every grade level of public school education. Not only is this the case in the Asian countries when trans-cultural studies and surveys are done, but it is also the situation with Asian-American children, that is, children who are born to Asian couples living in the United States.

Chinese-American and Japanese-American youngsters tend to be at the top of their classes in almost every situation in which they are found. This raises an interesting academic question: Are Asian

youngsters intrinsically more intellectually gifted than their Western counterparts? A body of literature is developing which suggests that the Asian child is better able to deal with academic life from the earliest preschool years through university education. The logical answer for this is that Asian family life, in some way, acts to enhance academic readiness and achievement.

Research done by Friedman (1969, 1974) indicates that from birth Chinese children are better behaved and more obedient than white children. Further, this research indicates the pre-nursery school Chinese-American youngsters are more emotionally in control of themselves and willing to conform to the demands of their teachers than are their white and black counterparts. Infants of Asian ancestry appear better able to handle novel events, the unexpected, and situations that might be considered traumatic.

Friedman's research further indicates that from very early in life Chinese children seem capable of dealing with excitability in a more positive way than Western children. Chinese-American newborns are less likely to become perturbed, accept change, and tend to calm themselves more readily when they are upset. In areas of sensory development, motor development and response to stimuli (e.g., light and sound), Western children in America and Chinese-American children have been shown to be quite equal. Friedman's interpretation is strongly suggestive of a genetic predisposition on the part of Chinese children

to be easier to deal with, more abiding to parent's desires, less excitable, and to reach a level of learning readiness at an earlier age (1974). This research has been validated by other sociologists and psychologists, though the works by Friedman seem to be the most revealing of these characteristics of the Chinese child.

The question, of course, is what sociological factors may be related to bringing about these positive attributes in young Chinese children. It is my view that from the earliest moment - from the moment they give birth - Chinese mothers react differently than American mothers to the behavior of their children. When asked what traits they wanted in the personalities of their children, pregnant Chinese mothers indicated that staying close to mother, being respectful to elderly people, and conforming to the ways of family life were most important. American mothers indicated that their top choices were laughing and smiling easily, and being active and talkative (Fiske, 1984). This difference in expectations and the subtle ways that these expectations are communicated from the mother to the child may explain why Chinese youngsters, from infancy through high school, appear ready to accept the academic environment better than do youngsters from the West.

Chinese family life differs dramatically from American family life in attitudes towards leniency and strictness. These two features may

help us better understand another important facet in the academic achievement of youngsters. My observations of Chinese families throughout Asia suggest to me that most parents tend to be highly indulgent, extremely lenient, overly casual about discipline, and readily yielding in most cases to young children. I define here young children to mean those below six or seven years of age. It should be noted that, once a child enters school, this period of frivolity and indulgence ends rather dramatically and the school teacher and parents, particularly the mother, discipline the children in a variety of ways that they believe will have a positive effect on academic achievement. This change, which occurs usually at six years of age, comes about abruptly and signifies to the child that he is no longer an infant; he now becomes a miniature adult, accepting the responsibilities of a job - the job being going to school and succeeding in the academic process. Research by Wolf in Taiwan communities indicates that this abrupt change can be traumatizing on the child and even bewildering (Wolf, 1972; Gallin, 1966).

While I was a visiting professor in Formosa from 1986 to 1988, I surveyed my students as to their attitudes toward disciplining children. The consensus was that children should be treated with great leniency until they reached an age at which <u>they could see</u> the relationship between wrongdoing and punishment. Two hundred twenty college students were asked to identify what they believed to be the

age of understanding. The majority (57 percent) indicated that a child began to understand wrongdoing at age five; many (33 percent) suggested age six or seven. Few indicated that youngsters below five had any sense of doing something wrong. American parents, on the other hand, believe that a child can benefit from discipline at a much earlier age. Children in China run freely through their houses, eat when and what they wish to eat, and go to bed at a time that is to their liking. They turn on the television when they want, they involve themselves in any activity they choose, and parents willingly allow them to run wild and free. They sleep with their sisters, brothers, or parents, depending on their mood and inclinations. Toilet training as we know it in the West does not exist. Small children simply go to the bathroom when and where they choose, and parents and grandparents deal with this with humor and kidding. Interestingly, the average age for children to be toilet trained in the United States and in Taiwan is approximately the same. In both societies, girls tend to accept the use of the bathroom more quickly than boys. On the whole, the period from birth to six years of age can be said to be one of great indulgence and leniency, of happiness and of freedom.

It should be added that during this period it is the mother, not the father, who takes on virtually all of the responsibilities for the child. As soon as a wife gives birth, the child moves into the bed with the mother-wife, and the father-husband finds a different part of

the room or the house in which to sleep. This continues until the child is approximately seven years of age. Hence, if a family has a number of children, it is not uncommon for the Chinese father-husband to have his own room and to leave the mother-wife and their children in the master bedroom. Children are never put in cribs; rather, the mother will frequently place pillows around the infant so he will not roll out of bed. In all of my time in the Orient, visiting quite literally hundreds of Chinese households in which there were infants, I never on any occasion observed a crib.

Although the mother stays geographically very close to her child, it is possible that she does this more out of protectiveness and physical caring than out of what Westerners might refer to as affection and love. If the mother must be away from the child, and this happens quite frequently in modern Taiwan, where many women have part-time jobs, other members of the family, particularly the grandmothers, become mother-substitutes. If the grandmother is not available, then neighbors, friends, or distant relatives may take on responsibility of the child rearing process. Interestingly, these individuals continue the practice of leniency and indulgence. Yet on those rare occasions when a child is reprimanded, the substitute mother seems as willing to do this as the real mother. Thus children in modern Taiwan receive what might be called multiple mothering from a very young age. I recently traveled by bus from Taichung in central Taiwan to the

northern metropolis of Taipei, a two-hour trip. Because of heavy traffic, the trip was extended to three hours. An infant on the bus became fidgety and began crying. The mother was unable to quiet the one-year-old and three or four other women - some students, some mothers themselves - began playing with the infant. The baby was literally passed around the bus. The child's mother meanwhile took a short nap, and the baby became quite content to be played with by women who obviously enjoyed making the infant happy and relaxed. I doubt that one would see this type of experience - which is very common in Asia - replicated in the United States or Europe. Children are seen by Chinese parents and by society as highly dependent, passive creatures who are to be cared for and whose needs are to be met without delay. It is rare for a Chinese child to cry. At the first indication of whimpering, even for an infant, the mother immediately picks up the child, carries it, talks to it, cuddles it, or tickles it. Chinese mothers believe that a child should not cry and that, if the child is crying, then she, the mother, is not doing her part in proper upbringing of the infant.

The only area in which permissiveness does not exist is in the area of sexuality. Chinese mothers and grandmothers retain very puritanical ideas concerning the behavior of their infants and also the environment in which the infants live. In the years that I have spent in Asia, I have never seen a Chinese man walk the streets, work in his

yard, or even relax in his home without wearing a shirt and long trousers. Children, from the youngest age, wear clothing in the house. Mothers and grandmothers emphasize the need that children be protected from nudity. I would suspect that it is rare for a little boy or little girl to see his parents not fully clothed, irrespective of the situation. This does not seem to be related to fear of incest or child molestation. Rather, steeped in Chinese culture is the idea that it is in the best interests of society if the naked body is clothed.

A major area in which the childhood experience in Chinese Taiwan differs from what we may find in the West is the insistence on the part of parents that the Chinese child not allow his feelings of anger, disappointment, or vengeance to be shown. The concern with impulse control is no doubt grounded in the concept of filial piety and also the teachings of Confucius, who believed that children must never in any way show disapproval of their parents, their older siblings, their teachers, or the leaders of their society. Hence, Chinese parents, particularly mothers, in these very early years of attitude formation, place great emphasis on self-discipline and proper behavior; and they place very little emphasis on such qualities as creativity, independent thought, expression of opinions, and other traits that we in the West would see as helping develop a well-rounded personality. Ironically, the leniency found in the Chinese family in no way seems to mitigate

the desire of Chinese parents to encourage in their children a high degree of stoic self-control. Chinese parental views toward aggression and acts of violence committed by their young children differ dramatically from what we find in most Western cultures. The expression of aggressive behavior, especially physical aggressiveness, is strictly prohibited by Chinese grandparents, parents, and parent substitutes.

The values of sharing, non-competitiveness, and working together are emphasized. Older children are encouraged to set examples of good manners, sharing, and willingness to give in when there is an argument (Ho, 1986). In my teaching in the Orient, I found that the attitude of sharing among college students still prevailed. In some ways this was a dilemma, in that Chinese college students do not view plagiarism or sharing information on an examination as particularly wrong. In fact, when asked, they told me quite directly they felt they had an obligation and a duty to help their classmates who were not prepared for the examination. If they did not help these classmates, a competitive and perhaps even antagonistic dichotomy could develop in the classroom setting. The Chinese realize that for years, perhaps decades and even generations, they will be living in the same community and interacting almost daily with the same people. If aggressive and violent behavior between youngsters was transferred to adults, this would bring about years of unhappiness between members of a non-mobile

community. As a consequence, Chinese parents in Taiwan tend to deal severely with children who are physically aggressive, particularly if this aggression is directed toward younger children. A survey done while I was in Taiwan indicated that Chinese mothers in all cases would demand that their children avoid an aggressive act. Even in appropriate situations (by Western standards), Chinese mothers never put pressure on their children to fight back under any circumstances. My experience growing up in the United States suggests to me that American parents usually believe that being assertive and aggressive in the right situation is healthier than avoiding confrontation.

Some of the most important studies on Taiwan and family life on island Formosa, completed by Wolf and Wolf in the 1960's and 1970's emphasized rural family life. They make the point that adults in small communities are extremely concerned with quarrels and fighting in children, not so much because of injuries that may result from these altercations but rather because of the potential for disruptiveness within the small community between families that must co-exist for long periods of time. Chinese adults are very hesitant to be drawn into conflicts that endanger good relationships between relatives, friends, neighbors, or acquaintances. In rural Taiwan, a child guilty of aggression will frequently be severely punished by his mother or by his father. However, a child doing virtually any other activity which we in the West may see as asocial or unsocial will seldom even receive a

frown from his parents (Gallin, 1966; Ho, 1986; Wolf, 1971, 1978). Fighting and stealing are the two misbehaviors that are most feared by rural adults living in Taiwan in relationship to their children, mainly because these activities could have the patulous effect of threatening harmonious relationships between adults. In rural Taiwan, and to a lesser degree in middle-class urban and suburban Taiwan, parents tend to be severe in controlling their child's aggressive impulses. Frequently, they preempt the child by locking him or her in the room until the anger is cooled and the child can go safely into the neighborhood without the family fearing an aggressive act. Please note that I am talking now about children under age seven, not adult children, adolescent children, or even elementary aged children.

Chinese mothers, as has been mentioned before, take on most of the responsibility for raising the child. Relatively few young Chinese mothers in Taiwan work outside of the home; rather, it is the Oriental tradition that the woman remain at home to raise the children, care for the house and food preparation, and also to be sure that the old people in the family are treated generously and with respect. Chinese mothers seldom use physical or corporal punishment on their children. Rather, the main method of control, based on my observations, seems to be more subtle. The mother in Chinese society in modern Taiwan uses what I term "love-denial" as the main method of controlling the impulsiveness of her child (Stevenson). By love-denial, I am suggesting that, when a

child who has had a strong and highly dependent relationship with his mother does something disconcerting or disruptive to the family or does not abide by the dictates of the parent or teacher, the mother, rather than use corporal punishment, will subtly indicate that the child's behavior is threatening to the relationship that has been so intense between the mother (herself) and her youngster. A good example might be this: A Chinese mother asks her youngster to wear a certain garment so that he will not dirty his good clothes. The youngster chooses to wear his good clothes to go out in the street to play. The mother says, "Fine, if you insist on wearing that, go ahead." Most Western children would think nothing of this and would run out of the house believing that they had, in fact, been able to get away with something. The hidden message here between the Chinese mother and her child is that a contract exists. The contract states that "I as your mother care for you and love you and, because I love you, I make these decisions for you. You as my child accept this love by abiding by my decisions. By your refusing to dress as I have told you, you have challenged the contract and are telling me that, as my child, you do not need my love and care. Therefore, I will let you wear what you want in the future, but you must understand that I will not love you as much." This very subtle, manipulative behavior on the part of Chinese mothers towards their children works as an extremely effective control mechanism, in that it is terrifying for a Chinese child (or for any

child) to feel that his mother may be lessening her level of love (Kojima, 1986).

It might be worthwhile to note at this point that the fundamental attitude of adults toward children differs in East Asia from what we find in North America. Asian society believes that children are inherently perfect, that they are born filled with goodness. We in the West have been influenced by the Christian-Calvinistic view of children, which suggests that all human beings have fallen from grace and can only regain a life of nobility by divine assistance. Hence, we in the West regard human nature as inherently evil. Chinese society asserts that children are inherently good at birth; therefore, there is no need for strict discipline. Left to their own, children will naturally come to understand the surrounding world. They will act properly, in that they will not gravitate towards evil ways. Perhaps this comparison of the attitude of children East and West lies at the foundation of why Asian parents living in Taiwan, Japan, and Korea today are more apt to be indulgent and lenient toward their children than their Western counterparts living in modern America and Europe (Yamamura, 1986).

An interesting aspect of Chinese family life is the important role the grandparents play in helping to rear and foster proper deportment in the young. During my ten academic visits to the Orient and my two-

year stint as a visiting professor at Tunghai University, I have been able to observe the interaction between children and their parents and also children and their grandparents. Indeed it is not unusual, even in academic circles (which pride themselves on their Western attitudes), for a professor and his wife to have one or more members of the oldest generation living in their house. The grandparents' role in family life and child rearing is both symbolic and functional. Grandmothers take on a good part of the responsibility for child care. Frequently, if a mother is tired, ill, out of town, or working, the grandmother becomes a very effective and reliable mother-substitute. My observations suggest to me that grandparents enjoy very much this role and are insulted if they are denied the opportunity to spend a great deal of time with their grandchildren.

Chinese society is often seen as traditional, which means that the ideas of the past tend to have a great influence on the day-to-day lives of the present generation. One reason for this is that grandparents, whose ideas were formed fifty, sixty, or even seventy years ago, pass these concepts of morality, proper behavior, filial piety, honesty, and hard work on to their grandchildren. It is not unusual for a grandmother, at six o'clock in the morning, to be seen walking down a country road or in an urban park with an infant strapped to her back. She is not necessarily going anyplace; she is simply out for a walk. This gives the rest of the family some free time; it gives

the child the opportunity to be out-of-doors, and gives the grandmother a sense of being worthwhile and valuable to the family, even though she may be aged and unable to do other types of employment.

Grandfathers do not have the same role with their grandchildren as does the grandmother. The grandfather is more of a symbol in the household. He represents what the Confucian tradition would suggest to be continuity - continuity of the name, continuity of success - and he symbolically represents to the outside that the family's economic status is comfortable enough to afford him the leisure of taking his aged years at their house without having to do any work. He may on occasion tutor his grandchildren, but more often than not he has little interaction with the young. However, whenever a boy or girl enters the teenage years, the grandfather, if his health and situation permits, becomes quite active in attending all of the events and ceremonies that are so popular in Chinese Taiwan at the local school level. These ceremonious occasions seem to be attended, in large part, by grandparents, the reason being two-fold. First, parents like their children, must work six days a week. Saturday is a work day, though only a half day is spent at the office or school, and most of the school events take place during school hours. The grandfather and the grandmother, therefore, have a greater opportunity to attend than do working parents or mothers who may have other children at home. Secondly, Taiwan, unlike the United States, has excellent public

transportation. There are buses, trains, and taxis in virtually all parts of Formosa. Private ownership of cars, though it is becoming more popular, still is not the norm. Rather, the common way for people to commute, is by bus, inexpensive taxi or train, especially outside of the large cities. Children from first grade through high school usually ride public buses. There simply are no school buses for 95 percent of the children (Smith, 1981). If a child lives close to school, he may ride his bicycle. The convenience of public transportation and the easy access that most elderly people have to public transportation allow them the opportunity to interact with their grandchild's extra-curricular activities in the area of sports, music, dance, and art displays. I am always deeply impressed when I go to a school activity put on by an elementary school and see literally hundreds of aged people led around by their grandchildren to the different art exhibits or sitting with their grandchildren while a dance or music performance is in progress.

Old people in Taiwan need not fear crime and violence as we know it in the United States; it is inconceivable that an aged person would be pushed, shoved, or in any way hassled on the streets or public transportation systems of Taiwan today. Young people are quick to give up their seats on public transportation to elderly or infirm persons. All of this suggests that the Confucian tradition of respecting and revering age and elderliness remains an important part of Taiwan

culture (Smith, 1978, 1981, 1984, 1986 1987). In reality, Confucian tradition is alive, but there is practical advantage to having old people at home. Their presence in the home relieves much of the burden associated with child rearing and also precludes having to use hard earned money to maintain a separate domicile for the aged parents.

I might add here that it is not unusual for some of the greatest difficulties within families to be related to the care and maintenance of the aged. Sons, and to a lesser degree daughters, frequently have serious arguments, not over who must take care of the aged parent but over who has the honor of caring for the parent and having the parent live in their house. These arguments are usually mollified by a time-sharing process where the grandmother or grandfather will move seasonally from house to house, depending on the suitability of the house during the various seasons or climate periods in Taiwan (Smith, 1986). In doing a survey of married women at Tunghai University campus in Taichung, Taiwan, I asked this question: "Do you feel the involvement of a grandparent in the life of your child is or was (a) very important, (b) moderately important, (c) important, (d) not too important, (e) insignificant?" All of those women questioned who had a living mother or mother-in-law indicated either (a) or (b). Fathers, when asked the same question, rated their own mothers' involvement as being very important but were unwilling to give the same high rating to the involvement of their mothers-in-law. I suspect this was more out

of respect to their own mothers rather than out of disparagement toward their mothers-in-law.

Research done by a variety of writers, including Wolf, Ho, and myself, suggests that physical punishment of children is less likely than ridicule and coercion. Chinese parents will seldom let a subject drop until the child has shown sorrow for what he has done. Children perceive their parents quite differently in the paternalistic society of Taiwan than what might be found in the West. Though the mother on a day-to-day basis has the most influence on the child and the child fears most significantly the loss of love from the mother, the father still retains the position of patriarch. His word is law; and a boy who disobeys his father or does not conform to the exact wishes of his father may anticipate a severe scolding, particularly if he is in high school or junior high school. My surveys of students from Chung Hsing University and Tunghai University indicate that Chinese youngsters' first reactions to their father are respect and fear and awe; whereas a Chinese child's first reaction to his mother is happiness, excitement, and a sense of bonding. (Forty students were questioned on this issue, 1987). We should note here that it is very infrequent for a Chinese father to become so upset with the behavior of his child that he resorts to punishment, particularly corporal punishment. It appears that the mother uses the father's authority as

a weapon to control the child. Stated rather succinctly, the mother will suggest to the child that, if his behavior does not conform to her expectations, the father will be informed when he arrives home and he will then raise the level of punishment. It is infrequent that a mother must resort to this alternate device to control her young child.

While in the Orient, I noticed something that I was quite unable to understand, based on Western mores and Western behaviors. Chinese mothers appear to be less concerned with the physical safety of their children than Western mothers. I am not suggesting that the Chinese mother is cavalier about safety but, as an example, Chinese children riding on a bus with their mothers will frequently be allowed to hang out the windows while the bus is in motion. Seldom do Chinese parents enforce the seat belt regulation, and it is not infrequent to see a Chinese mother and father and two children riding on a motorcycle on wet streets or in dangerous traffic. I thought about this and what it meant. Did it mean that Chinese parents were less loving or caring of their children or were less concerned about the survival of the species? After careful thought and after discussing with colleagues and friends what I had observed, I came to what I considered to be a unique conclusion. American mothers tend to work under the assumption of <u>possibility</u> - a child riding his bicycle on wet roads with his little brother and sister on the handlebars and on the back bookrack possibly could have a terrible accident. A Chinese mother looks at it quite

differently; she deals with probability - more than likely the child will not have an accident.

What seems to happen in Chinese family life is that the Chinese people evaluate statistically the probability of a problem or a disaster occurring. As a consequence, they deal at a subconscious level with the mathematics of probability. There is a great probability that nothing will happen when a child does not wear a seat belt, or when he is hanging out a bus window waving to his friends while the bus is in motion, or when he carries other children on his bicycle when roads are wet. Why there is this dichotomy between East and West - the dichotomy of the possible versus the probable - is something I cannot answer; but no doubt it is steeped deep in Chinese psychology and, over the long run, has benefited the survival of the Chinese people and their important and enduring civilization.

Let us now look at another feature that must be included in our discussion of the Chinese family and children of China. This is called "face." As Professor Mark Thelin suggests in his outstanding article on Chinese values, face is perhaps the core of all Chinese values (1983). All societies have what could be referred to as a concept of face. The best definition of face is perhaps this: Face refers to the public presentation of the self or the family. When an individual loses face, it suggests that he has placed himself in a situation where he has allowed himself to be humiliated. Chinese family life is

closely linked with the concept of face. Public ridicule in child-rearing practices, in husband-wife relationships, and in care of the elderly could cause a loss of face. As a consequence, Chinese families constantly evaluate and weigh their behavior in regard to the norms and expectant modes of conduct in Chinese society in modern Taiwan. A child doing poorly in school, even in the earliest grades, brings a slight loss of face to his family. He is made aware of this very quickly. On the other hand, a child who excels in academic life brings a "big face" to his family and he is rewarded for this. As I have mentioned in my other books, the school as perceived by the Chinese is never wrong (Smith, 1984, 1986). If a child does poorly in school, it is a result of his laziness, his lack of cooperation, or his misbehavior. It cannot be a result of the school presenting an educational program unsuitable for the child's needs. Individual needs in China and in Japan always are subservient to the needs of the group, and, as a consequence, all children have an equal chance to succeed. Because of this, the loss of face by a family through the misdeed or the academic weakness of a child is problematic and is frequently dealt with through humiliation of the child; however, a variety of positive methods are also employed to enhance his talents as a student.

Of significant importance in any study of family life are relationships that exist in the Chinese household. Perhaps the most

important relationship is that which exists between the mother and the son (Levy, 1971). This relationship, theoretically, requires obedience and respect of the son and kindness and care of the mother. In actuality, the mother has special reasons for her attachment and devotion to her son. These two important reasons are: First, by having a son and having him behave properly, the mother's status in the eyes of her husband and her husband's family is enhanced. Secondly, the mother realizes that she has a vested interest in the high achievement of the son; because, if he is successful, she can be more assured of a comfortable old age than if he is unsuccessful and becomes poor or unemployed.

The father-daughter relationship in Chinese families has changed dramatically over the years. Historically, the daughter gave total and complete obedience to her father, and the father's role was to support the girl until her marriage. In recent years, with the opening of universities and educational programs for boys and girls on an equal basis, daughters have moved up on the scale, from where they were at the bottom, to a fairly high place; and today, in many families, fathers will actually speak highly of their daughters and their daughters' achievements in school and in society.

The mother-daughter relationship was dependent on the daughter learning how to behave properly in her role as a woman, and the mother was expected to train the daughter to be a good wife and mother herself

when the time came. More recently, this has changed; and, though a democratic relationship has not developed between the mother and the daughter, it can be said that the modern Chinese mother in Taiwan is more willing to accept the daughter as a partner in household activities and to give the daughter benefits previously given only to the son.

The last relationship I shall look at is between the father and son. This must be described as patrilineal. It is still felt, to a degree, in modern Taiwan that the son (particularly the oldest son) must succeed to the father's role in the course of time. There is always the possibility of a rivalry between father and son; however, my experience in the Orient suggests that this is very rare. A father's relationship to his son is one of solidarity. Obedience of the son to the father is paramount, even after the son has left home and established his own career and family (Levy, 1971). It is common, from what I have seen, for a father who may live many miles away from his son to telephone and ask the boy, who may be an adult, to visit him within a few days. All of the business, academic, travel and personal family obligations that the son may have will be altered in order that he may fulfill the wish of his father.

In modern Taiwan the role of the Chinese father with young children may be considered that of a passive observer, though in recent years I have noticed that more Chinese fathers appear to be enjoying the company of their sons or daughters. This is evidenced by the large

number of Chinese children who are carried by their fathers while at the numerous recreational sites, mountain hiking areas, and at the beach. When I first started visiting Taiwan in the mid-1970's, this was observed only infrequently. Today in contemporary Taiwan, fathers do seem to be more involved with the recreational aspects of family life than in the past. The relationships that I have mentioned did not occur haphazardly or in a vacuous condition; rather, they are based on the ideals presented by the Confucian ethic, specifically on the notion that, in order for Chinese society to exist harmoniously, to prosper, and to allow all members their due share of social life and economic betterment, these Confucian models and modalities must be adhered to.

Recent years have seen numerous changes come to the Chinese family in Taiwan. The father's authority has declined and now is seen as more moderate and reasonable. Yet, as Robert M. Marsh* has observed in his important study "The Taiwanese of Taipei," published in the *Journal of Asian Studies* (1968), the married couples of Taiwan are more eager, willing, and less resentful in giving their parents a home and other financial assistance than in other developed nations of the world.

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*R. M. Marsh's research is dated but remains the most readable and balanced version of the changes occurring in family life in modern Formosa.

They are also more inclined to request that their parents live with them and help with the child-rearing process. Conversely, parents are more likely to give continued financial aid to their children even after they are married and have completed their education. Unmarried children, irrespective of age, continue to live at home. There also appears to be a desire to maintain the traditions of classical family life, such as ancestor worship and the signs of respect accorded older members of the bloodline, and, at the same time, future and present-orientedness (not past-oriented as in traditional Confucian society) (Marsh, 1968).

We must now, in summary, make some observations that are worth noting about the Asian child and his achievement.

Chinese parents in Taiwan are willing to make great economic sacrifices for their child's academic success. Achievement is held in high regard by all Asian societies. The Chinese and the Japanese both believe that the most honorable way to be successful in this society is through the conduit of academic success. Chinese parents place academics almost as highly on the list of positive attributes as they do filial piety. Academics is not an end in itself to the Chinese family; rather, it is a means to an end. By this, I mean that success in academic life, particularly in the examination systems, will allow a

child to work his way or her way up the social ladder. Thus, the family, which has a vested interest in the child's economic well being, will have the potential to better its own economic status and financial security through the child's success.

The distinguished scholar Harold W. Stevenson, of the Center for Human Growth and Development at the University of Michigan, has done extensive research on Asian children. Stevenson's thesis is that Chinese children in Taiwan and Japanese children achieve far better in grades 1 through 12 than their American counterparts. Stevenson points to the fact that parents play a major role in their child's attitude toward school settings. Chinese mothers, for instance, read perhaps three times as much to their infants as do their American counterpart mothers. They also involve their young in games that are educational to a much higher degree. Stevenson also notes that television is more restricted in the Taiwan family than in the American family and that group interactions between the grandfather, the father, the college age son, the high school daughter and the infant around the game table are quite normal. Stevenson also points to the interesting paradox that American children not only achieve at a lower level, but their parents are more content with what they are doing. Chinese mothers are quick to point to their child's academic weakness and are critical of their offspring. American mothers tend to identify the weak link as the school, and not their child (Fiske, 1984). Academic achievement,

therefore, is seen as a matter of individual discipline, future orientedness, and a personal choice on the part of the child to succeed in the school environment.

Kuo has done excellent field-based research on reading disability in Taiwan (Kuo, 1981). His conclusion is that Chinese children seldom have problems related to reading. It was also found in this research done by Professor Kuo (past president of the prestigious National Tiawan Normal University and currently Minister of State) that primary school teachers are unaware of the existence of reading dysfunctionality. When told what a reading disability was, school teachers indicated that there were none in the Chinese students in their classes. Children of China who do have what we in the West might call a reading disability are very few, and it tends to be considered a behavior disorder rather than something that relates to information processing. The view is that, if a child works diligently on learning his characters, he will not have a reading disability. Perhaps this rarity of the problem of reading among Chinese children may be explained by the fact that Chinese students are more familiar with their language than are their Western counterparts. Of great significance is the nature of the Chinese language, which is based on idiographic characters. Each word is a distinctive unit. Each character becomes a perceptual gestalt ready for dual coding; that is, it is both a semantic component and a visual object. Considerable

evidence, quoting from Dr. Kuo, indicates that Chinese children seldom read at a level below expectations. It is estimated that only about 5 percent of the children of Taiwan have reading problems. In the U.S. the number is currently as high as 65 percent.

Another aspect of Chinese society and its relationship to the childhood experience concerns the concept of recognition of childhood. From what has been presented over the previous pages, it is obvious that the childhood years in Taiwan differ rather dramatically from the experience youngsters have in Western societies. Clearly, the Chinese conception of the child is more complicated than a simple objectification of the child as the center of the mother's attention. Childhood is seen by the Chinese as something other than a transitional step from birth to adulthood. The fundamental nature of the Chinese child as viewed in traditional Chinese literature and as presented in the music, theater, and art work of China suggests that children, because of their inherent goodness, are morally superior to the adult. One could speculate that adulthood, therefore, is lower on the scale of ethical and moral evolution than childhood (Smith, 1987; Yamamura, 1986). Recognition of childhood is not a new phenomenon in China or Japan. While we in the West have only in recent centuries accepted the notion that a childhood experience does exist, the Chinese (and to a lesser degree the Japanese) have, since the early Tang Dynasty, placed

special emphasis on this important phase in the evolution of the individual.

Western society did not have a clear understanding of childhood until the seventeenth century; and, even until the nineteenth century, the idea that a child is something other than a miniature adult was not recognized fully by Western philosophers and others. Europe and America chose not to place any special restrictions on the childhood experience. Children, after they were capable of caring for their fundamental needs, were no longer cherished, nourished, or segregated from adult society. The mysteries, the secrets, the language, and the morals of adulthood quickly filtered down to children. No special care or protection from the adult world was given to children in Western society. Philippe Aries in his important book *Centuries of Childhood* (1962) speaks in detail about this problem that Western civilization experienced (see also Postman, Bettelheim, deMause). On the other hand, East Asian societies, specifically Chinese and Japanese civilizations, were cognizant 2,000 years ago of the uniqueness of the childhood experience. They see it as a distinct period of human development and, as a consequence, children in Asian societies have been treated with entitlements and specialness that were not found in Western civilization until the nineteenth century.

The Chinese family is an exciting, dynamic, and charming environment in which to live. I have, over the last twelve years, resided with numerous Chinese families in Taiwan, and Bali, Hong Kong,

and Singapore. I never cease to be amazed at how effectively the Chinese family is orchestrated with so little rancor and with seemingly a paucity of tension. Children appear to read subtle signals in body language in their older brothers and sisters and in their parents and fall into behavior patterns that make Chinese family life enjoyable for most of the members (Smith, 1986).

Dinner time is especially wonderful in a Chinese home. The old and the young gather around large circular tables; the aged man or the foreign visitor, who will be considered the guest of honor, sits at this round table facing the doorway. A copious amount of food is attractively arranged on the table and the family begins the ritual of eating. It is quite proper for the children, who are mingled with the adults at this round table, to serve the adults sitting nearest them and then to serve themselves. The discussion at the dinner table never deals with anything that could bring disharmony or displeasure. Most of the talking is done by the oldest men at the table. Children occasionally will chime in. Instinctively, they seem to support the ideas of their elders and not challenge them. They also recognize that their turn will come, perhaps in many years, when they can speak ex cathedra at the dinner table without fear of ridicule or challenge and that, when this time comes, their notions will be listened to, respected, and, if presented well, even applauded. My experience is that women speak less frequently during mealtime but do respond when a

specific question is addressed to them. Chinese society in Taiwan is changing. Young people now can afford to socialize outside of their homes. Coffee shops, tea shops, and other spots for recreation allow the young people of Taiwan the opportunity to have a social life separate from their elders; and yet the happiest moments for the young, be they infants or college age, seem to be those in which the whole family and numerous friends have gathered for meals.

On two separate occasions, I asked my students at Tunghai University and Chung Hsing University how they most enjoyed spending their vacation time. Seventy-five percent of the students asked (out of a group of 210) indicated that being home with their family was the most enjoyable way to spend summer vacation. Ninety-five percent indicated that the only way they could enjoy spending their Chinese Lunar New Year vacation (also called Tet season) was to be with their family at home. I have never asked a similar question of my American undergraduate or graduate students; however, I suspect that we would find American students indicating that being on vacation with friends in Florida, California, or Hawaii would be more enjoyable to them than being at home for vacation or for a major national holiday. This family centeredness in which all members of the family look forward to being together has its genesis in the earliest years of childhood.

I believe that the relationship that is established between the infant and his mother never truly ends in Chinese society and that the

young man or young woman in college, or even after college, still has imprinted in his subconscious this bond of love, respect, and the need to please that is so prevalent when one looks at the mother/child relationship in contemporary Taiwan. How this influences the traditional relationship between a husband and a wife is difficult to understand; and, for a Western researcher, it is perhaps impossible to fully comprehend. One could suggest that the childhood experience, with the intense bonding between the mother and her child and the authoritarian relationship between the father and the child, causes difficulties in marriage that we in the West cannot fully appreciate. Marriage for the Chinese, based on my surveys of students at Tunghai University and Chinese Cultural University in Taipei, is not seen as a relationship for companionship or for sharing of experiences, feelings, problems, and ideals. Rather, the Chinese and Japanese marriage is built more on the desire of both parties to find the most ideal mate for the purpose of having and raising children who will carry on the family name and status, who will bring positive face to the family, and who, as the parents age, will care for the parents in their material and emotional needs. Whether the notion of Western love, as defined by poets, novelists, and philosophers, exists in Chinese society and Japanese society is unanswerable. It is my opinion that the choice to marry is more calculated and more planned in Asian society than in the West and its focus is the bearing and raising of children.

Most Asian scholars who address the issue of childhood believe implicitly, or explicitly, that the nature of the infant is fundamentally good (Ho, 1986; Bond, 1986; Yamamura, 1986). This notion, as has been mentioned earlier, does not conform to the Western view which holds that all persons are burdened with the sins of Adam and Eve. The Chinese view had its origins with the Chinese Confucian scholar Mencius, 380-289 B.C. According to this great philosopher, all evil in human beings is the result of events that corrupt the originally good nature of the child. This view appears to be held today by Chinese educationalists and psychologists. The child is inherently good and, therefore, his behavior (even if by Western definition is "naughty") is in fact natural and pure. Aggressiveness is seen as unnatural and is cause for alarm. This notion also suggests a democratic, egalitarian view of children. If children are equally virtuous, then their economic and social status is of little consequence when they enter the classroom. In the schools of Taiwan, Western notions of learning dysfunctionality, channeling, giftedness, and slowness are not accepted by the educators of modern Taiwan. The children are seen as good and equal in the eyes of the teacher, and this expectation is usually realized in the Chinese classroom where the traditional bell curve of learning that prevails in the West to define cognitive development is unusable from the earliest to the final grades in the Chinese school. If one tried to diagram Chinese children on a

learning curve, there would be a cluster with an overwhelming majority of the children performing at essentially the same level and only a few showing giftedness or slowness.

Family life centers around interpersonal relationships, a patriarchal and centralized decision-making system, and an emphasis on nurturing and indulging infants and young children. Studies of young people's political attitudes suggest that family life is directly related to the development of political perceptions. Important research by Marsh, Wilson, and Wolfe indicates that political attitude formation begins at a very early age in the traditional Chinese family setting. From the earliest time, the child is encouraged to remain apolitical, that is, to avoid addressing topics that we in the West would call political in nature. There are a variety of reasons for this phenomenon that prevails throughout Taiwanese family life (Appleton, 1970, 1973).

The first reason is that the relationship between the child and his parents is not one of compromise. Rather, it is essentially an authoritarian relationship based on a patriarchal centralism and a matriarchal nurturing and love-giving and love-withdrawing discipline model. Western families emphasize participation in decision making by younger as well as older members. The Asian family, as found in modern-day Taiwan, does not encourage the young to contribute to the decision-making process vis-a-vis family issues.

A second reason for the phenomenon of youthful non-participation in political activities is historical. China, prior to 1911, was ruled by emperors and empresses. The Mandate from Heaven granted the authority to rule to the civilization's leader. His decisions were final, and his right over the people was unchallenged. This historical precedent can be found in the misty ages of Chinese antiquity. Confucius further emphasized the importance in proper relationships, one of the most important of which was the relationship of loyalty of the populace to the emperor and his ministers.

The third reason that the young people, even in infancy, are encouraged to remain apolitical is much more practical. In 1945, the heroic efforts of the Chinese army defeated the invading Japanese and helped to bring about an end to World War II. The period 1945-1949 was one of the most complex and tragic in Chinese history. Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek, who led the Chinese armies to their victory over the Japanese, and Mao Tse-tung, the leader of the Chinese Communist Party, were in contention for control over the Chinese mainland. Tragically for those who supported Chiang Kai-shek and perhaps for Chinese civilization, Mao Tse-tung, with the support of the Soviet Union and also a general widespread support of the peasantry of China, was able to bring about his form of government. In 1945 Chiang Kai-shek, like his predecessor of the 17th century, Koxinga, led a group numbering almost three million to Taiwan. Taiwan was made into a fortress to

thwart the anticipated invasion of the island by the huge Communist Chinese army under the leadership of Lin Piao and Chou En-lai. The invasion never came. One reason was that President Harry Truman, of the United States, seeing the difficulties that were developing because of the Korean War, issued orders placing a large naval contingent in the Strait of Formosa and also sent diplomatic messages through England, Switzerland, and other nations with embassies in mainland China warning the leaders of the Chinese Communist party that the United States would consider it an unfriendly act if mainland China attempted to use its overwhelming military force to invade the island of Formosa. The arrival of large numbers of mainlanders to Formosa from 1945 to 1950 and the removal of Japanese military personnel and government officials from Formosa to Japan created tension between the indigenous population (the Taiwanese) and the newly arrived mainlanders. One reason for this antagonism was that Taiwan, during World War II, had been occupied by Japan and was not truly involved in the horrors of the war that most mainlanders faced, particularly in Shanghai, Canton, Nanking, and other regions of mainland China. Many mainlanders felt that the Taiwanese, though they were Chinese, had not created enough difficulties during the period of World War II to disrupt the Japanese occupiers and imperialists on the island. The Taiwanese, on the other hand, believed that the end of World War II would entitle them to a great degree of political, social, economic,

and cultural autonomy. They were optimistic that the central government of China would incorporate Taiwan back into Chinese civilization but, at the same time, would recognize the island's uniqueness and therefore treat the Taiwanese people gingerly. This was not to be. Numerous difficulties emerged that placed the majority population of Taiwanese in confrontation with the newly arrived minority population of mainlanders. Bloodshed, rioting, brutality, and crimes were committed by both groups in their efforts to establish what they believed to be the proper political and economic status of Taiwan.

Hence, the young people of Taiwan today, the infants of Taiwan today, the elementary school children of Taiwan today, are encouraged to remain out of politics because, it is said, a man who involves himself in politics in Taiwan and loses might find himself the subject of ridicule, harassment, or even punishment (Clough, 1978; Wilson, 1981, 1970). As a consequence, these four factors - (1) the nature of the authoritativeness of the Chinese family, (2) the history of China and its centralized bureaucracy, (3) the teachings of Confucious with his emphasis on respect for authority, and (4) political events in Taiwanese history, particularly after World War II - suggest that the best posture for an individual, be he a child or an adult, is one of hard work, academic achievement, involvement in the economic system, but a cautious disassociation with anything that might be seen as

political in nature. During my numerous visits to Taiwan, I found that the attitude of the young is guardedly optimistic concerning their political rights and their freedoms. Older people still are fearful of political involvement, and this seeps down through the family to infants and youths.

One of the ironies I should like to note is that Taiwan is the only Asian society in which there appears to be a close correlation between education levels and support for the existing regime. Japan, the Philippines, Singapore, Malaysia, and Korea, all are nations to which a peoples' disapproval of government activities can be closely related to the level of their education. Taiwan, based on research done by numerous scholars, including Marsh (1968), is a nation in which the highly educated generally are more supportive of the government than the less educated (who generally remain neutral). This no doubt is a historical characteristic of Chinese civilization. One must remember that, for thousands of years, the highly educated men of China held government positions and these posts were granted to them by the Emperor or his designee after the successful completion of rigorous, fair, and open government-sponsored and government-sanctioned regional and national examinations. I think we may anticipate a growing degree of political activism among the young people of Taiwan and also an even greater level of support for the government now that liberalizations, initiated by the late Chiang Ching-kuo and being followed by the

current president, Dr. Lee Tung-hui, are being realized in Taiwan society.

I am frequently told by colleagues and friends in the United States that young Chinese are not as creative as children of the West. Colleagues in Taiwan have also indicated to me that they felt their creativity and their potential for creativity was less than their American and European counterparts. Whether this is true or whether it is a statement that cannot be grounded in empirical research is something that I, as a historian, cannot answer. However, the notion that Asian students, even though they achieve brilliantly on standardized international examinations, are not as creative as their Western counterparts is so pervasive and is directly related to the Chinese family that it must be addressed in this study of children of China.

I believe that the young people of China in Taiwan in their earliest years and up to the age of six or seven display as much creativity as Western children. They are interested in nature, they have inquiring minds, they enjoy sound, movement, color, and they are able to deal with unique situations. All of these characteristics suggest to me that there is a high degree of creativity in the youngsters in Chinese society. I must concur with the variety of individuals who have suggested that young people of Asian ancestry are

not as creative as Western youngsters provided this proviso is included: that they are not as creative as Western children after they enter the public school system and before they are admitted to college. What I am suggesting is that grades one through twelve and students age six to eighteen generally do not present the same sense of creativity that we find in Western children of the same academic, intellectual, and economic levels. One difficulty, of course, is to define creativity. Youngsters in Asian society certainly are as gifted in the fields of music, dance, theater, and athletics as are their Western counterparts. I believe that we must define creativity for the sake of this argument to mean spontaneous acts that lead to unique, individualized achievement in the arts, dance, music, literature, poetry, ad infinitum. It is my contention that the lack of creativity, using the aforementioned definition, is not genetically based, nor is it related to the family configuration or parental expectations; rather, I believe it is akin more closely to a fundamental attribute of Chinese civilization, and that is the Chinese language.

The Chinese language, of all of the great languages of the world, is perhaps the most difficult to learn. A disproportionate amount of the Chinese students' school day in Taiwan is directly related to language development and competency. The Chinese language does not rely on an alphabet, but rather each word has its own unique character. These are referred to as ideograms. The English language

and the Chinese language are essentially the same size, consisting of approximately 40,000 different words. In the English language, all of these words can be created by the placement of letters together. The Chinese language does not afford this luxury; rather, the language of Cathay makes the demand of the learner to commit to memory the different ideograms that form the Chinese language. The only possible way that a young person can learn this complex language is through rote memorization. Characters, when they are being learned in the typical Chinese classroom, are copied hundreds of times. Words, because of the subtle intonations, are repeated hundreds of times. Reading is a matter of recalling the figure or the character, translating the ideogram in the brain into a word, and then, if desired, speaking that word. Phonics are impossible in the Chinese language (Russell, 1922). It is a language that depends very heavily, almost exclusively, on memorization.

Dr. An Wang, president of Wang Corporation of America, one of the largest computer manufacturers, has stated that learning the Chinese language is an excellent background for learning mathematics (Cohen, 1983), in that both the Chinese language and mathematics skills depend heavily on memorization and also interpreting characters and formulas (Smith, 1984). The rote memorization of the Chinese language, a language that is essential for any Chinese who wishes to become successful in academic life, precludes creativity. With approximately

50 percent of the classroom day devoted to language study and with this process of learning the Chinese language dependent exclusively on memorization, it is no small wonder that creativity must give way to conformity. Rote learning, recall memorization, and recognition of the subtleties of the thousands of characters that make up the Chinese language are the essence of language development in the elementary, middle, and senior high schools in modern Taiwan, as well as in all societies in which the Chinese language is used.

An eminently noticeable feature of modern society in Taiwan is the real difference in the way the younger pupils stand out from the rest of society. It is the policy of the educational leadership to make the learning experience unique in a young person's life and to make those years when a boy or girl attends primary, middle, and secondary school at time of specialness.

In the United States and in most of Europe, the childhood experience has been eroded. Young people are encouraged by television commercials, peer pressure, and the might of industrial advertisers to become adults at as early an age as possible. This adultification has robbed Western children of the childhood experience that is so important in developing imagination, creative skills, and personal relationships. Television has played a major role in this problem. Neil Postman suggests that the replacement of the art of reading with

the television has deeply influenced the normal social, intellectual, and emotional growth of the young people in America (Postman, 1982). Television sends the same message and information to all who watch it, be they 5, 16, 30, or 70 years of age. Because the programming elite of television are eager to appeal to that group in society with the greatest purchasing power, the programs developed are aimed at younger and older adults. Yet the messages in these programs are available to any who watch them. Many of the shows seen on television glorify falsely the adult world and encourage youngsters to emulate adult behavior patterns, language, and morality.

Postman contends that the development of the book in 15th century Europe brought about the concept of childhood as a separate period in a person's life. Before that time adults and children probably had the same entertainment, values, language, and activities. The written word requires certain skills to understand, and only a mature person can develop the skills necessary to read. As a consequence, the advent of the printing press ushered in the childhood experience as a separate stage or level in the growth process. The advent of television - which requires no skill to comprehend - appears to be challenging the childhood experience.

In Taiwan a conscious effort has been made to prolong childhood. Children who attend school must conform to strict codes of behavior, deportment, and conduct, including dress codes, grooming regulations,

and appropriate social, physical, and entertainment activities for youth. Television shows of a purely entertainment value are shown in Taiwan at selected times; at other hours educational television dominates the airwaves.

Emphasis in the schools is placed on punctuality, politeness, personal health and hygiene, respect for one's peers and teachers, concern about the environment, and academic preparation. Dating is discouraged. Coeducational programs and schools, as a rule, do not exist; and all boys/all girls schools are the rule, not the exception. The educational authorities believe that there should be no unnecessary distraction to the orderly process of teaching and learning. They also believe that coeducational activities, improper dress, and hair styles that might reflect vainness or conceit are not conducive to the reason why children are at the high school - to learn and to prepare for the rigors of the competitive examination that must be passed to move into colleges and universities in Taiwan.

In modern Taiwan, children are given great consideration in their educational opportunities. Families will make major sacrifices to afford their offspring a good education. Housework, chores, and part-time jobs are virtually unknown to the boy or girl who is at an academic high school. Conversely, the youngster is expected to do three to five hours of homework each day to assure progress in his academic endeavors. The process of centering the child's life on the

educative process of reading, computation, and the dynamic social, cultural, and intellectual curricula and extra-curricular activities tends to prolong the childhood experience. This experience, psychologists suggest, is related to contentment in later life; frustrations with not having had a full childhood may often appear in unsocial behavior in adults who subconsciously are attempting to recapture areas of the youthful developmental process that were never available to them.

One difficulty caused by the prolongation of the childhood period is in the realm of social interaction between men and women. Counselors and psychologists in Taiwan are quick to point out that fears and shyness often accompany men and women even in their 20's when they do begin to have co-sexual social life.

Yet, the integrity of the childhood years as years of freedom from mimicking the adult experience are maintained through the coordinated efforts of the public school leadership, the parents, and the other segments of Taiwan society.

CONCLUSIONS

In summary, we can suggest the following about children of China: Chinese infants from earliest days tend to be less active, less vocal, less apprehensive about new environments, easier to care for, more

concerned with pleasing their mothers, less fidgety, and more capable of fitting into the family routine than Western youngsters. There are numerous methods of discipline and control used by Chinese parents. One that is used successfully I term love-denial, or -withdrawal, or the threat of love-denial or -withdrawal. Children are essentially allowed to live a free and unrestrained life for their first seven years. The only area in which great freedom is not extended is aggressive behavior, and in this parents are very strict and will punish their children severely. A highly puritanical dimension exists in Chinese society today in many areas. Although such things as toilet training, a child's bedtime activity (that is, what time he goes to bed), and sisters, brothers, and parents sleeping in the same bed or rooms are not of concern to most Chinese parents, proper deportment concerning dress within the family and within the household is of great importance. Seldom would a Chinese appear not fully dressed, even in the confines of the house. Motivation of Chinese children is more subtle than is found in the West and is oriented towards collective or group behavior and not individual behavior. Helping one's friends, in a cooperative sense, do well in school is important to the Chinese. Surpassing one's friends is looked down upon. Chinese children are encouraged from an early age to be non-political. This is the result of Chinese paternalistic families, the Confucian tradition, the influence of the previous dynasties of China and most importantly,

current events in Taiwan, particularly from 1945 to 1950. Chinese children have very few difficulties in reading; reading dysfunctionality does not exist, as we know it, in Chinese education. Conformity during the school years is highly noticeable in Taiwan, and it is my view that this conformity is not intrinsic but rather related to the Chinese language, which requires and demands a conformity in effort, memorization, and style. Children do not stagnate in the areas of dance, music, art, athletics; however, their spontaneity in the area of creativity is not as great as one would expect in the West. Chinese parents tend to be highly lenient, or even indulgent, in their attitudes toward young children, particularly little boys. The reason for this is that most Chinese do not believe a child under age six understands the relationship between proper behavior and discipline. Therefore, discipline to a Chinese in Taiwan is meaningless when applied to an infant and is counter-productive. The Chinese believe very strongly that a child born to a family is a gift and that he is born with absolute perfect morality and ethics. The Western view is quite different. Our assumption is that all children are born and are condemned because of the original sin and, therefore, they must work very hard and be disciplined and punished to cleanse them of their sinfulness. Great emphasis is placed on obedience, proper conduct, morality, and social obligation in the modern Chinese family in Taiwan. Little emphasis is placed on the need to be independent, the need to be assertive, or the need to be spontaneously creative. In a

traditional Chinese family, the father is perceived as the harsher disciplinarian, while the mother takes care of the day-to-day activities with her children, devoting a great deal of time and energy to the welfare and education of her infant and children. The father's place is very secondary in the child-rearing process, and the relationship between the average Chinese father and his children would not be one of affection, but rather of authority and respect.

REFLECTIONS

The purpose of this paper was to present to the reader insights into the socialization process of children in the Chinese family in modern Taiwan. A synthesis of literature, surveys, field-based observations, and personal experiences were used to develop this essay. It will be the job of the reader to take the information that has been presented and draw conclusions as to how the Chinese family and the modalities used in the raising of Chinese children interface with academic achievement, scholastic success, a willingness and eagerness to do homework, future-orientedness, respect for school personnel and property, conformity in learning, excellent deportment and behavior, and all of those other characteristics that make up the modality of the teaching-learning environment that is found in contemporary Taiwan.

As was mentioned earlier in this essay, generalizations are necessary. Each Chinese family is different from every other Chinese family. Taiwan, with its twenty million people, is a dynamic society; and the people in Taiwan, though more similar to each other than the people in America, still differ greatly in their goals, their aspirations, their values, and their ways of life. Hence, many of the generalizations that have been made in this study may seem to be inapplicable to all situations. However, it is my impression, and also it is the view of others, that there are distinct differences in Chinese family life and Western family life. A limited number of these differences I have tried to identify; and it is my view, and the thesis of this article, that many of these differences contribute in a positive way to the academic achievement of younger and older children in Taiwan.

The underlying assumption in this study is that one of the best ways to understand the complex problems associated with the relationship between the child-rearing and family life and education is through a knowledge of how other cultures cope with such issues. The interest that we in the West now have in Oriental life (particularly in Japan and China) and how Asians do business, approach religion, and live out the various transitions in their existence stirred me to do the research, surveys, and field-based observational activities necessary to prepare this essay. I have purposely looked at materials

from the fields of history, psychology, education, sociology, and anthropology in order to develop an understanding of children of China. I hope that the information presented here is meaningful and will have a positive impact on the growing body of literature in comparative transcultural studies. An effort has been made to write this essay utilizing non-technical language and to cover a breadth of topics that are subsumed by the general title *Children of China*. I claim not to have provided here a definitive or authoritative study but am hopeful that those who read this essay will develop thoughtful insights and enough interest in this subject to continue inquiries into the formative years of children and the relationship between these early years and academic achievement.

Whether a society that is changing as dramatically and as quickly as modern Formosa can have the best of both worlds - orderliness and traditions within the family configuration and at the same time economic development, social mobility, world interrelatedness - is impossible to presage. The social anomalies related to youth that plague America, Western Europe, Hong Kong, and Japan may find their way into Taiwan and have a potentially deleterious effect on that society's amazing growth and development. Perhaps, though, the four thousand years of Chinese history which has culminated in the society that now exists in Taiwan will preclude changes that will threaten the better traditions and values of Chinese life.

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Children of China
Appendix A

Lecture Presented at Taipei Municipal Teachers College
To the 3,000 Students, Teachers and Administrators
December 1987
by Douglas C. Smith

(Elaborations and diversions given in detail and translated to Chinese)

I am very honored to be at your wonderful college. Your fine President, Dr. Mao, and I have known each other for many years. Dr. Mao is one of the best educators in Taiwan and I have learned a great deal about education from President Mao.

My research this year is on the elementary school and also the Chinese family in Taiwan. I am trying to discover why Chinese education is so successful here in beautiful Taiwan. We in America are now faced with a crisis in education. Many children in elementary, middle school, and high school cannot read or do math. Violence against teachers and students is a serious problem in American schools. Parents are not concerned about their children's school success, and deterioration of family life in my country has become a serious problem. Over 50 percent of all families will be involved with divorce. This is very difficult for children. Most mothers work outside of the home. This creates added stress on the family. Children, when they are in junior and senior high school, often go home to an empty house without guidance from parents or grandparents. An4 recently drugs have become a serious problem in the schools of my country.

One reason I have come to Taiwan so often is to try to learn more about Chinese education and why it is so successful.

Today I will share with you some of my research findings that will appear in my new book. The book will be called *Children of China*.

Findings

(Elaborations given in detail and translated to Chinese)

1. Children in Taiwan read and write better than American children, grades 1-6.

2. Children in Taiwan have better math scores than their American counterparts.

3. Parents generally spend more time each day on tutoring children in Taiwan than in the US.

4. Parents when asked, indicated that schools are important for children to be successful in life - 95 percent in Taiwan - 55 percent in USA.

5. If a child does poorly in school, Chinese parents usually indicate that the child has not worked hard enough (85 percent Taiwan). In America, 60 percent of the parents believe the problem was related to the school and <u>not the child</u>.

6. Children in Taiwan watch only 25 percent as much television as American children (US about 4 hours per day).

7. American children do about 30 minutes of study at home in the 6th grade. Chinese children do about 2 hours homework in the 6th grade.

8. The Chinese school year is 240 days; American, 180.

9. Chinese children spend more time in school than American students and attend classes on Saturdays.

10. In Taiwan schools, about 60 percent of the day (grades 7-9) is spent on academic work. For American schools, about 35 percent of time is spent on academic work, e.g., math, science, language.

11. Moral education is not part of American education.

12. Teachers in America (75 percent) indicate that they wish they were not teachers; 30 percent in Taiwan indicate they wish they had chosen a different profession. (Main complaint - USA, fear of children and discipline; in Taiwan, economic).

13. In kindergarten - 3rd grade, teachers touch, kiss and hu6g their students regularly in Taiwan schools. In America, teachers seldom touch the students.

14. Teachers in Taiwan indicate great pride in their professions; American teachers (80 percent) feel that their profession is an unhappy one and they would not want their own children to become teachers (grades 1 - 12).

15. The general public in Taiwan ranks teaching as one of the best professions. The general American public ranks teaching as a weak profession - "for those who cannot find good jobs."

16. The men and women who become teachers in America are generally the worst college students (bottom 25 percent graduates). The people who become teachers in Taiwan are frequently the best high school and college students.

My findings are not happy ones for America. But to make American education better, we must learn from nations like Taiwan, Japan, and Singapore. That is one reason I have come to your island - I want to help improve American education by learning why Taiwan education is so successful.

My visits to your college and my conversations with your president, Dr. Mao, one of Taiwan's great educators, will help me understand education in my country and in yours. Thank you.

APOLOGIA

On a recent trip to the University of California at Berkeley, I came across a book by Miss Ann Ping Chen titled *CHILDREN OF CHINA: VOICES FROM RECENT YEARS*, published by Alfred A. Knopf in 1988. Miss Chen's book examines those factors in Mainland Chinese society, particularly the Cultural Revolution, that have influenced young people's perceptions of the world. I recommend highly Ann Ping Chen's study *CHILDREN OF CHINA*.

I do wish to note that the title *CHILDREN OF CHINA* was first used by me in 1986 when I was awarded a grant from the Pacific Cultural Foundation in Taiwan. At that time, this title was registered with the Foundation. I wish it to be understood that these two studies, which fortuitously have the same title, are not related in topic, research methodology, or conclusions.

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